

ALCOHOL & DISEASE.

ADDRESSES BY THE

RIGHT REV. F. TEMPLE, D.D.,

Lord Bishop of London;

AND THE

VEN. ARCHDEACON FARRAR, D.D.,

Chaplain to the Queen; Canon of Westminster.

ALSO,

TEMPERANCE IN HOSPITALS;

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THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON
ON
ALCOHOL AND DISEASE.*

T is a very great satisfaction to me to be able to come here to-day to take part in the proceedings which will presently follow, because I look upon such a Hospital as this as doing a most indispensable work, and it is quite evident from the growth of the Hospital that it has succeeded in doing that work. We have necessarily, in fighting our battle against the curse of intemperance, to deal with a good many different kinds of argument, and some of those arguments have to be dealt with by ordinary reasoning upon well-known facts. If it be said, for instance, that the course taken by the total abstainer is inconsistent with the Bible, we have to examine what is said in the Bible, and to see how far the declarations of the Holy Scriptures bear upon this matter. If again, it be said that the course taken by the total abstainer is inconsistent with the true philosophy of human nature, if it be argued that the fact that alcohol exists is a proof to us that it ought to be used, because we cannot conceive that anything would be allowed to exist that had not some use in it, we immediately have to examine the question what is the right use of it, and whether it is the right use to employ it as an ordinary beverage or in ordinary cases of illness and the like. These are questions which have to be settled, generally speaking, by fair discussion, and the materials for the discussion are for the most part in the possession of all well-instructed people. But there are certain arguments which cannot be dealt with in that way at all, as, for instance, when the working people tell us, as they used to tell us very generally, and as a great many of them tell us now, that they cannot do their work without it, and that it is necessary for their strength; that a man who totally abstains is sure after

* An address delivered at the opening of the new wing of the London Temperance Hospital, 9th October, 1885.

a while, if not at once, to fail in turning out such good work and such thorough work as they who take these intoxicating liquors, and that these things are necessary as a support, you cannot meet such an argument as that with any abstract reasoning whatever. It is of no use to tell such a man that he is mistaken; he has, he thinks, the plain proof in himself that he is not mistaken. He does feel that the beer, at any rate for a time, makes him more comfortable; it gives him a sense of being supported, and he very naturally concludes that he does his work the better for it. There is only one way of dealing with that kind of argument, and that is by the working men setting to work without the beer, and letting it be seen if it is the case that they do not do their work as well. That is an argument which strikes home, and accordingly in all cases where the cause has been taken up by the working men themselves they have been able to prevail upon other working men, to a degree in which it is quite impossible for the more cultivated classes to prevail even with whatever eloquence they may have at command. Precisely of the same kind is the argument that we have to meet with in a place like this. If you have the medical tradition established for a very long time, and saying that the proper treatment of a great number of cases is by the administration of alcohol, it is of no use for you to say to a medical man, "I cannot see it: I do not believe it: I think you can do better without alcohol." The man says, "You are setting yourself against the tradition of centuries, and the long-established practice of a great profession; you are setting up your own individual opinion, based upon mere speculation only, against what has been tried and proved hundreds of times. There is not a hospital where you will not be told that the administration of alcohol is a necessity absolute in a large number of cases; that, in fact, alcohol is one of the most useful drugs they employ, and when you say it should be altogether given up, even if we admitted what you say as regards people in health, we cannot admit it at all as regards people out of health, who have to be treated by medical science." What is the answer to this? Well, medical men, of course, have a very strong ground when they stand in this way upon that accumulated experience—what can be your answer? Why, if you really believe what you say, if you believe that alcohol is not necessary

as a drug, you can only answer those who think otherwise, and who plead this kind of experience, by counter experience. That is exactly what we are doing here. We have a Hospital, and we say, "Come and look at what we are doing." We not only believe what we teach and what we practise, but we risk our whole existence as a Hospital upon this practice. We are prepared to say that we do treat people, and for the same diseases precisely, and for the same accidents, and when they are suffering in precisely the same degree, and just when they are in a condition when other hospitals would give them alcohol, we treat them without it. We will compare the results which we attain with the results which they attain. We do not say that they do not heal their patients, but we say that we heal our patients, and we heal as large a percentage as any other hospital that can be quoted. We say that in dealing with accidents we are as sure of what is best for the men who have suffered the accidents as any other hospital that can be named. We ask to be tested by the results of our action, and let it be seen whether, when we curtail the administration of alcohol down to so very small a point as we show in our reports, the patients suffer in consequence. We are prepared in the long run to go farther—a great deal farther, for we believe that we shall succeed in showing not merely that alcohol is not necessary, but that it is hurtful; that there are very few cases in which it is not hurtful; that there are very few cases in which it would not be better not to administer it at all. Our medical men are perfectly free to administer it if they think it necessary. There is no let or hindrance; but of course the medical men who belong to this Hospital hold the convictions that belong to it, and they do not believe that it is often necessary, and of course, therefore, they will not use it very often, but they will use it occasionally, when, in their opinion, this particular drug is wanted for some particular purpose. We believe that by persevering in this course we shall be able satisfactorily to prove that the administration of alcohol as ordinarily practised is far beyond that of any necessity for it whatever. I do not know that we have data upon which it is possible to anticipate, that it may ever be shown that under no circumstances whatever ought alcohol ever to be given—I am not prepared to say that; I do not know that there is any medical man who would be pre-

pared to tell us so; but I think it is highly likely, when I look back upon the history of the past, that we shall succeed in showing that the administration of alcohol is very rarely necessary indeed, and that in a very large number of cases it would not only be unnecessary, but even mischievous. Of course all this has to be treated in the first instance on medical grounds. The Hospital stands upon such grounds, and can stand upon no other. It is quite obvious that it would be absurd to set up a hospital in which you should say that there must be something else than medical experience to override the question. That is clear; but then, on the other hand, that being granted, there are surely most important moral questions involved. Let it be supposed that in any given case when you have the choice you may administer alcohol, or you may administer something else, and let it be supposed that either will be in the particular instance a successful drug, because it may very often happen that you may have a choice between the two modes of treatment—let it be granted that there are such cases—then I say that on moral grounds it is better clearly that you should not administer the alcohol, because, for all that you can see, by administering it you may be creating a taste which will do moral mischief incalculably great afterwards. You may have turned out your patient in better health than that in which he came in, you may have restored him to perfect health, but if, at the same time, you have given him a taste for something in his weakness which will one day ruin him body and soul, have you fulfilled your duty as a medical man? Have you fulfilled your duty even if you stand upon the lowest possible ground? Is it right that you should run so terrible a risk? And the risk is undeniable. There cannot be any question that in many cases the prescription of alcohol has done very serious moral harm, even if it be granted that it has done no physical harm; even if it be granted that it was not wrong medically, it was certainly wrong in its moral results, and unless it can be shown that the medical requirements of the case made it absolutely necessary to give the alcohol, it is quite clear that a very serious evil has been done with no corresponding benefit. I cannot help looking upon such a Hospital as this as occupying a most important and essential part of the great battle that all the advocates of Temperance have to fight. I cannot help thinking that a great deal will be done if such a

Hospital as this can fairly hold its way in the medical profession, and I augur from looking over the past that success is certain, because I remember when I look back over the history of this cause that it was nothing but the perseverance of the total abstainers that succeeded at last in converting the medical profession as a whole. The medical profession is not at all unwilling to open its mind to new ideas. There are very few professions in which there is a more earnest desire to endeavour to investigate things to their very bottom. At the same time it must always be considered that the art of healing is an exceedingly difficult and complex art, and that the science embraces an exceedingly wide range of knowledge—a range of knowledge wider, perhaps, than comes within that of any other science that can be named, and it must be remembered, therefore, that it depends to a great degree upon the demand made upon the medical profession by the public at large, to which branch of the question, to what particular problem they will turn their attention. A large part of medical science must be, from the nature of the case, for a long time yet to come the result of past tradition. No man, no body of men, can take hold of the whole art of healing and at once revolutionise it by getting rid of all the old traditions and making it the result entirely of exact science. You must take in all the traditions of the past, and consequently the medical profession will examine one question at one time and another at another time, but what is it that has compelled them to look at this question? Well, it is the steady perseverance and insistence of those who were advocating the temperance cause. They would not be content to be told that past experience convinces us that alcohol is a useful article of food, and as a drug in cases of illness. They would maintain—“No, you must look into the case; you must examine it medically; you must test it to the very last before we will acknowledge that what is so mischievous morally is nevertheless so necessary medically. We must be satisfied.” Well, the medical profession have answered to the call, and already there can be no question that there is a very great difference of opinion from what was their ordinary sentiment, say, even fifty or sixty years ago. There is a very considerable change, and it is an honest change. It is the result of a real examination of the question. We want

to push that examination. We want to go on insisting that the thing shall be tested practically. Here in this Hospital it is to be so tested, and we shall rejoice the more the Hospital is looked into; and, if it has faults, let those faults be pointed out, and if there be defects, let those defects be shown. The Hospital challenges investigation: and those who maintain and support it are convinced in their consciences that the more investigation that is given to it the better, and that the temperance cause has everything to gain and nothing to lose by calling upon the medical profession everywhere to see for themselves whether medical experience, tested and examined by the strictest tests medical science can apply, does not respond to our assertion that alcohol is very rarely indeed of any use in the medical treatment of disease or of accident, and that in almost all cases where there is no disease and no accident, but where there is real health, alcohol is certainly useless, and very probably mischievous.

ARCHDEACON FARRAR

ON

THE TEMPERANCE HOSPITAL.

At the Annual Meeting of the London Temperance Hospital Hampstead Road, on Thursday, May 28, 1885, the Ven. Archdeacon FARRAR, D.D., said, speaking from the chair: I think that this London Temperance Hospital furnishes a very remarkable proof of the strength of the temperance cause, and of the intensity of conviction by which those who support it are actuated. I think it required a resolution hardly less than heroic to undertake a task so burdensome, I might almost say so overwhelming, as the founding of a new Hospital in London; but these great

buildings, which many of us, I dare say, have just had the pleasure of visiting, and the twelve years of work which this Hospital has so nobly accomplished, show that the faith of those temperance workers who started the Hospital has been amply rewarded. It is a most gratifying fact that such a Hospital should have been able to collect for its original foundation no less than £26,000, and that since that it should have raised a sum amounting to, I believe, nearly £20,000 more, in addition to the £3,000 or £4,000 which it requires every year to carry on its ordinary operations. And it seems to me that years hence, perhaps a whole generation or two generations hence, when it makes, as we think, its final and, as I believe, its predestined victory—this great building will stand as a visible and permanent memorial of the vitality and determination of a struggle which I, for one, feel to be quite as glorious and quite as necessary as that battle which was fought by our fathers to the great glory of England, and which ended in the abolition of the slave trade and the emancipation of the slave. This Hospital claims support, on two grounds; first of all, simply because it is a Hospital, and therefore takes its place among the great charities of London. But this Hospital claims your support chiefly because it desires to render a great service to humanity by proving the principle that alcohol is unnecessary in the cure of disease. We know that by an almost exceptionless rule alcohol has been found to be unnecessary in all normal cases for the preservation of health, and the object of this Hospital is to prove that by a rule also almost exceptionless alcohol is, contrary to what has hitherto been the general opinion and practice of physicians, unnecessary for the cure of disease, and the London Temperance Hospital may claim to have already gone very far to demonstrate that result. Since this Hospital was first founded there have been in it nearly 3,000 in-patients and upwards of 19,000 out-patients. Among those patients there have been specimens of almost every conceivable kind of the misery and derangement of the human system. There have been in the words of Milton:—

“Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Marasmus and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.”

And yet during a space of twelve years, and over the large

area of more than 22,000 patients, the rule that disease can be cured without alcohol has proved to be so, almost without exception, that in only two cases in all those years has alcohol been administered. Therefore, I think that the London Temperance Hospital may claim already to have demonstrated by positive experience that those who thought that disease could not be cured without the use of intoxicating stimulants were labouring under a very deeply-seated mistake. Perhaps, when I said just now that the practice of this Hospital is against the ordinary practice and theory of physicians and surgeons in recent times, you thought that I was practically condemning the principles of the hospitals altogether; but that is not the case. I believe all the greatest members of the medical profession would frankly admit—certainly in past days, from the time of Galen downwards, they had admitted—that a great deal of their theory and practice is of necessity conjectural, tentative, hypothetical, I had almost said, in many cases, empirical. If they would not make that admission, I think we must say that, to a certain extent, history will make it for them. Let us take three instances. We all know that less than a hundred years ago the practice of bleeding as a restorative and curative measure was almost universal. I cannot say for certain whether it was for reasons of health that the monks of my own Abbey of Westminster in former days, as well as in many other monasteries, regularly bled every month, and after the bleeding generally adjourned to the neighbouring infirmary and passed by the name of *mentati*. Nor can I say whether it is the fact that the great medical journal, the *Lancet*, derives its name and title from the frequency, in a former generation, of the practice of bleeding. But I am speaking in the presence of distinguished members of the medical profession, and I do not think they will correct me when I say I am convinced that the “blood thereof is the life thereof” in human beings, as well as in other animal organisations, and that this practice of universal bleeding was certainly needless, and probably in a great many cases highly deleterious. Take another instance. Not long ago the use of calomel was almost universal. Doses were constantly given. I have taken such doses as a boy at school of the most mixed ingredients and startling quantities that it is awful to think of. That is a practice which the greater enlightenment of

the medical profession of the present day has entirely abandoned as both useless and deleterious. In these instances, therefore, the profession has changed the view it previously held. Again, in the living memory of many of us eminent physicians adopted that method of treatment which I believe was called—though I may be making a mistake—the “phlogistic” treatment, which meant ordering to all sorts of patients large quantities of stimulants, especially of port wine. I was myself once under the treatment of a physician who in every case of illness seemed to think port wine a universal panacea. I think I am right in saying that that view of medical treatment has been abandoned as useless and detrimental by the greater enlightenment of the physicians of the present day. I think mankind found that it was a mistaken practice medically, because port wine tended to add to the virulence of some forms of disease, and they found it mistaken socially, because it burdened a great many families with needless and even ruinous expense, and they found it, above all, deleterious morally because in many cases it tended directly and indirectly to very widespread and soul-destroying intemperance. Therefore in this respect also there has been a change in the views of the medical faculty. And now the London Temperance Hospital is proving that not only is the administration of alcohol unnecessary in almost every case of disease, but also that they can treat the acutest cases with positive advantage to the patient without using any alcohol at all, so that henceforth, judging by their experience, hospitals may ease themselves at any rate from one very large item of their expenses, which has been an item tending rather in some institutions to the retardation than to the process of recovery of their patients. I suppose the promoters of this Temperance Hospital are very much encouraged by finding that alcohol has been for a long series of generations putting forward a large number of claims to prerogatives to which it had no title whatever. Alcohol is in the position of the daw that flaunted about for a long time in borrowed plumes, and was stripped one by one of the plumes that did not belong to it. Alcohol was for a long time an important article of food; it is now universally, or all but universally admitted, that the nutritious qualities of alcohol are almost infinitesimal. Then it was maintained for a long time that

alcohol was at any rate necessary for the health. Against that we have the experience of three or more millions of total abstainers in the United Kingdom, and of at least 20,000 prisoners to prove that health is entirely capable of being maintained without any aid from alcohol whatever. Then, again, it was maintained that alcohol was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of strength, but experience has proved that in every variety of climate, whether a march has to be made in the burning sand of India, or whether an Arctic sailor is to struggle nearer to the North Pole than any one had been before, alcohol is entirely unnecessary, and that the greatest feats of strength and endurance are not only performed as easily, but much more easily by abjuring alcohol altogether. Then another delusion on the subject was that it was a necessary source of warmth. Now the careful and accurate investigations of Dr. Richardson, and others, to whom the temperance cause is so deeply indebted, show that alcohol does, indeed, produce warmth, but so transient and superficial a warmth, that it is followed in all cases by a reaction, and sometimes a dangerous reaction. Lastly, it was maintained that alcohol was necessary for the cure of disease, and here it is that the London Temperance Hospital has stepped in and robbed alcohol of its last prerogative, and is every year adding to the accumulating mass of evidence which shows that although the medical staff of the hospital do not preclude themselves altogether from the use of alcohol as a pharmaceutical vehicle, or a therapeutic agent, still the cases in which they have had recourse to it are only two out of 22,000 patients in the course of twelve and a half years. Therefore, I think we may fairly appeal to you when we say that the London Temperance Hospital is doing a most important and a most blessed work, because its object is, behind all the charitable work which it does, to impress upon all who are acquainted with its working, that with the principles I have already been mentioning, the staff of this Hospital will never have for a moment to dread that through any action of theirs they have created in any of their patients a taste for those morbid agents which have the fatal property of creating for themselves a mighty and almost irresistible craving. The staff of this Hospital, at any rate, will never have to reproach themselves with having increased the already enormous

ranks of the ghastly demon of drunkenness and misery. They will never have to reproach themselves with ever having sowed the seeds in any one of their patients of that fatal habit, nor with having strengthened one single link of that chain of scorching, although unseen, fire which is forged in the distillery and the gin palace, of which one end is wound so tightly round the heart of its miserable victims, and of which the other end is in the hand of a fiend as mighty and as remorseless as any fiend who has ever gloated over ruined earth and fallen man. On all these grounds, therefore, I confidently appeal to your support for the London Temperance Hospital. I appeal for that support because it is increasing the domain of human knowledge. As God shows us, from time to time, new stars in the sky, so He shows us new truths in human science, and it is our positive duty to avail ourselves of those revelations, as part of His law in this universe which He has created. I appeal to you to support this Hospital because it is doing its work as a Hospital, and holding its own in all respects amongst the other great hospitals of London, and more than all, I appeal to you for support, because it is establishing a truth we feel to be necessary for the happiness of mankind. They must learn more and more to throw off the fatal tyranny of that dead chemical product which has the dreadful prerogative of having caused more human crime, and death, and misery, than any other product in the world. On all these grounds I leave the cause of the London Temperance Hospital in your hands, and I am sure you will be found among its warm and hearty supporters.

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON ON TEMPERANCE IN HOSPITALS.

[*From the LANCET, Oct. 17, 1885.*]

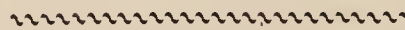
THE address of the Bishop of London at the opening of the newly-erected wing of the Temperance Hospital was a model address for the occasion. It was so chiefly because it was in itself temperate. The Bishop is understood to be a total abstainer, and his fine physique certainly is no discredit to the doctrine and practice of those whose only beverage is from the "clear stream." The chief evil that could be attributed to water as a beverage is a certain intemperance of argument in many of those who use it exclusively. But the address of the Bishop is strikingly free from this fault. It must be allowed, too, in fairness, that this intemperance of the temperate is much less frequent than it used to be, and that many abstainers practise their self-denying virtue with a quietness and unostentatiousness which greatly strengthen their example for good.

The Bishop did full justice to the medical profession when he said that they were quite open-minded on this question. It is true, as his Lordship said, that many of the members of the profession are abstainers; but the converse is also true. There is a very considerable number of medical men who absolutely abstain from Alcohol; and there is a still larger number, including the most eminent leaders of the profession, who take so little Alcohol that they may be set down as practically taking none. There is, too, in the practice of the medical profession a very marked diminution of the prescription of Alcohol. It is very seldom prescribed, and when it is prescribed it is in smaller quantities and in weaker forms than formerly. This change is very obvious in Hospitals generally, as well as in private practice. One reason for this, in the case of Hospitals, is in the almost entire abolition of suppuration which the use of the antiseptic system has brought about. The students who are beginning their education now can form no conception of the significance of this change, which can only be considered second in importance to the introduction of anæsthesia. They cannot realise the pints of pus—often stinking pus—that use to flow, sometimes for weeks, from compound fractures, from stumps, abscesses and wounds, twenty years since, at the expense of the patient's blood and to the great risk of his chief glands and of his vital powers. The process was accompanied with high

temperatures, and was most debilitating. All this has been altered, to the infinite advantage of the patient. Thus, not only does antisepticism save limbs, but it saves power, and blood, and glands from destruction. This abolition of suppuration has enormously reduced the need for Alcohol as an agent that the profession believes to be most useful in exhausted states. In the medical part of practice, too, improved means of dealing with febrile states, of reducing high temperatures, and averting the prostration which their continuance involves, have greatly lessened the need for large quantities of Alcohol, while more careful clinical observation has enlarged our knowledge of the harm which it is capable of doing in the way of producing disease or disorder of function. We may freely admit, too, to such a fair and sound reasoner as the Bishop of London, that physiology and common observation have been demonstrating for many years the dispensableness of Alcohol for ordinary people, especially all young people, in ordinary health. The experiments of Parkes and others, showing the limited power of ordinary people to consume Alcohol without its accumulating in the blood or passing out of the system unchanged, and the visible health and spirits of thousands of people amongst us who never taste it, and their good longevity, as shown by the experience of insurance offices—have been too strong to be overlooked by a profession so open-minded and so grave in its responsibilities as ours. On one special point, too, the opinion of the profession is unanimous—that not only must little Alcohol be taken if health is to be maintained, but that that little must be diluted, and, above all, mixed with food. No sensible man now will throw raw spirits, or even wine and beer, into an empty stomach; certainly no medical man will advise him to do so. The little that is taken must be covered with food, if injurious irritation of the mucous membrane and gastric nerves and the neighbouring liver is not to ensue.

No one will deny that the Temperance Hospital has done good. No member of its medical staff is prevented from prescribing Alcohol where it is thought absolutely necessary. This has been done in one in a thousand cases, and the mortality has been only 5 per cent. It may be that the Hospital, being still young and withholding Alcohol, does not yet receive the full share of grave cases which the confidence of the poorer classes takes to other Hospitals. But it is within our own knowledge that very grave cases are taken in, and are very well treated when received, and this with results highly creditable to the Hospital. We have only, in conclusion, to assure the Bishop and all who are nobly working for the well-being of the people, that they never had more earnest co-operators in the medical profession than they have now.

Why Support the London Temperance Hospital ?



1. BECAUSE—Besides its *benevolent* features, the London Temperance Hospital enables the treatment of disease without the ordinary use of alcohol, to be pursued under scientific observation, so as to give the profession and the general public full confidence in the registered results.

2. BECAUSE—The body of evidence thus collected cannot fail to impress the professional mind, and to attract the attention of the general public to the growing importance of the Temperance Movement.

3. BECAUSE—The In-door Patients of this Hospital are exempt from the temptations necessarily incident to alcoholic treatment, issuing too often in the relapse and ruin of those once happily reclaimed.

4. BECAUSE—This Institution ministers to the relief of large numbers annually of the sick poor outside its walls; and hence an influence, highly favourable to the promotion of Temperance habits, is exerted upon many who are exposed to the seductions of the Public house.

5. BECAUSE—The body of evidence thus collected in favour of abstinence from alcoholics as medicine will cause a more liberal support of all Temperance Associations, and will attract valuable reinforcements into the Temperance ranks from all classes.

6. BECAUSE—This Institution is truly NATIONAL, patients as well as subscriptions being received from all parts of the United Kingdom. The general community may be expected hereafter to lend this Institution their support, but its sustenance must rest for a time with the friends of Temperance and kindred institutions.



WANTS OF THE HOSPITAL.

The Hospital, in its enlarged form, wants an Annual revenue of from THREE TO FOUR THOUSAND POUNDS, which must be supplied by Voluntary Contributions.

The Hospital wants articles of utility, the presentation of which will render their purchase unnecessary, among which are included Coals, Furniture, Clothing, Books, &c.

The Hospital wants whatever may contribute to the comfort of the In-patients—Flowers are always acceptable, and can be sent to the care of the Lady Superintendent.

Donations or Annual Subscriptions are received by JOHN HUGHES, Esq., C.C., 3, West Street, Finsbury Circus, London, E.C.; THOMAS CASH Esq., 1, Adelaide Place, London Bridge, E.C., or by any member of the Board of Management, or can be paid to the credit of the Hospital into the Alliance Bank, Lothbury, E.C.

Communications on the general business of the Hospital should be addressed to the Hon. Sec., at the Hospital, Hampstead Road, N.W.